

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health

OF THE

WEST DEAN RURAL DISTRICT,

For the Year Ending December 31st, 1925.

The area of the West Dean Rural District is 21,609 acres, and the population, according to calculations of the Registrar General, 15,060. At the 1921 Census it was 14,750.

The number of inhabited houses in 1921 was 3,069. Since then 191 new houses have been built and many have been enlarged and improved, whereas only 5 have been closed, making the number of houses in 1925, 3,255, or 4.6 persons per house.

The number of families occupying these would be about 3,400.

The assessable value is now £44,623, and 1d. in the pound represents £161.

Outdoor relief was paid by the Guardians of the Poor to the amount of £4,712; £196 more than during 1924.

The Births total 308, a decrease of 29. The birth rate per 1,000 of the population is thereby reduced from 22.42 to 20.45. That of England and Wales is 18.3. In 1898, when the population was only about 12,000, there were 421 births registered, which gives a birth rate of 34.6 per 1,000. 164 were males and 144 females. 20 were illegitimate, an increase of 7.

The Deaths were 174—83 males and 91 females—six less than 1924. There is, therefore, a slight drop in the death rate from 11.97 to 11.55. That of England and Wales, 12.2.

Five deaths were due to violence and two to suicide.

say the deaths of infants under one year have risen from 19 to 31, or from 53.4 per

This is the highest infant mortality the district has suffered from for many years. this were Whooping Cough (5), Broncho Pneumonia (10), and Congenital Debility, due).

een remarkably free from infectious diseases. For the last five years the numbers

Annual Report of M.O.H.

Please circulate as quickly as possible.

		1921.	1922.	1923.	1924.	1925.
S.M.O. III. (86 II).	...	22	22	9	18	4
S.M.O. II. (42 II).	...	42	77	133	29	5
S.M.O. IV. (91 II).	d (including Paratyphoid)	0	1	5	2	0
	...	0	2	1	2	1
S.M.O. VI. (39 II).	...	5	0	0	0	13
	...	0	0	1	1	4
S.M.O. I. (110 II).	argica	0	0	0	4	0
	Pulmonary	16	16	14	17	17
	Non-pulmonary	4	1	12	20	4

The provision of an Isolation Hospital for Infectious Diseases is still under consideration. No definite settlement of this vexed question has as yet been arrived at. All I can say is that there is some hope of negotiations being re-opened for a settlement of the matter on the lines advocated in my Report for last year.

As regards the provision of a Water Supply, I regret to have to say that progress has been very slow, in consequence of difficulties which have been met with in the sinking of the well at Upper Redbrook. The strata through which the contractors have sunk have been, for the most part, the old red sandstone rock, interspersed with beds of red marl, which, being of a much softer constituency, has necessitated more steining than was expected. Owing to heavy rainfalls there has been on several occasions a large inrush of land water into the well. This has had to be pumped out more or less continuously during the sinking.

The well has been sunk about 150 feet, and the total yield at that level would approximately be 5,000 gallons per hour. As this quantity would not be sufficient, the Engineers propose boring a further 100 feet, when they assure the Council the required amount will be found. The borehole is 22 inches in diameter. Until an adequate water supply for the district has been found there will always be the same water famine with every period of dry weather lasting over one month. The shallow surface wells and underground storage tanks, on which the inhabitants are dependent, become exhausted in about that time.

Eighteen new houses were built in 1925, chiefly of the bungalow type, and 17 of them by the aid of the subsidy of about £75 per house. There is no doubt but that the subsidy is a great help and an inducement to build, as owing to the present cost of labour and material, the thrifty man could not build a dwelling of any sort for which he could get a reasonable return in rent without it. There is still a great scarcity of housing accommodation, but with the assistance of the subsidy (judging by results so far) I think that in a few more years the present overcrowding will have been relieved.

Nothing has been done by way of altering or improving the drainage in the district, excepting where the drains, by becoming blocked, have affected the cost of the maintenance of the roads. Where that has happened they have been cleaned out so as to allow any collection of rain water which may have accumulated to drain away. There is no sewerage system, as such. The rule which the Council endeavour to enforce is that each cottager (most of them have gardens) should dispose of his own refuse and ashes and waste house water on his own premises. The only sewers existing are where groups of Council houses have been built. These empty into septic tanks. Where the new Council buildings are not grouped and do not lend themselves to this system, the sewerage is disposed of by means of filtration trenches. This latter method will, I fear, give rise to constantly recurring nuisances if they are not properly looked after now.

Ashes and waste house refuse are only too frequently thrown on to the waste Forest land. Innumerable heaps of unsightly collections of ashes, broken bottles, broken crockery, empty tins, waste paper, and sometimes garbage as well, can be seen in many places. Besides being unsightly, they are a menace to the health of man and beast. The time is not far distant when this state of things will require attention. If fixed receptacles were arranged in convenient situations, it ought to be no hardship to the inhabitants living within a reasonable distance if they were asked to carry their rubbish and deposit it in the nearest of these receptacles.

The District is well supplied with milk, and there has been in recent years a distinct improvement in the attention given to the handling of it. It is being more and more recognised that scrupulous cleanliness is necessary. The vendors are mostly farmers, who produce their own milk. After submitting it to the process of cooling, it is put into churns and distributed to their customers. A complete register is kept and inspections of cowsheds, dairies, milk vessels, and the arrangements for cleansing them, are made periodically by your Sanitary Inspector, and, where necessary, by myself.

There are six small slaughter-houses. These, although by no means ideal, are kept fairly clean, and white-limed.

There has been an improvement in many of the Bakehouses. Kneading by hand is being superseded by mechanical machines for that purpose.

There are eight Factories and six Workshops in the District. These are well ventilated and are provided with fresh drinking water, and all, except one, with suitable sanitary accommodation. In one instance, however, the sanitary arrangements were most unsatisfactory. When brought to the notice of the owners they willingly promised to have the defects remedied, and to some extent this has been done.

Herewith I enclose the report of your Health Visitor.

P. BUCHANAN, M.B.,

Medical Officer of Health.

September 13th, 1926.

HEALTH VISITOR'S REPORT.

Jan. 1st—Dec. 31st, 1925.

MATERNITY AND CHILD WELFARE.

Number of infants under observation at commencement of year	...	...	...	1347
Number of infants under observation at end of year	...	...	...	1228
Visits to expectant mothers	...	...	...	5
Visits to children under one year	...	...	...	866
Visits to children over one year	...	...	...	3193
First visits	...	...	...	338
				4402

TUBERCULOSIS VISITING.

Number of cases under observation at commencement of year	...	...	112
Number of cases under observation at end of year	...	...	112
Visits for Tuberculosis	...	...	427
Total Visits	...	...	4829

P. E. WATKINS,

Health Visitor's Diploma.

C.M.B. Certificate.

Sanitary Inspector's Certificate (London).

WEST DEAN RURAL DISTRICT.

SEPTEMBER 13th, 1926.

TABLE C.

1.—GENERAL STATISTICS.

Area (acres)—21,609.

Population (1921)—14,750. Estimate as at 30th June, 1925—15,060.

Number of inhabited houses (1921)—3,069.

Number of families or separate occupiers—3,400 (Estimate).

Rateable Value—£44,623.

Sum represented by a penny rate—£161.

Outdoor relief paid during the year—£4,712 0s. 6d.

2.—EXTRACTS FROM VITAL STATISTICS OF THE YEAR.

Births :—	Total	M.	F.	
Legitimate ...	288	152	136	Birth Rate (R.G.) 20.45.
Illegitimate ...	20	12	8	
Deaths ...	174	93	81	Death Rate (R.G.) 11.55.

Number of women dying in, or in consequence of, childbirth—From sepsis, 1; from other causes, 2.

Deaths of infants under one year of age per 1,000 births—100.63. Legitimate, 31; Illegitimate, 0, Total, 31.

Deaths from Measles (all ages)—2.

Deaths from Whooping Cough (all ages)—2.

Deaths from Diarrhoea (under 2 years of age)—2.

3.—NOTIFIABLE DISEASES DURING THE YEAR.

Disease.	Total Cases Notified.	Cases admitted to Hospital.	Total Deaths.
Diphtheria ...	4	0	0
Scarlet Fever ...	5	0	0
Enteric Fever (including Paratyphoid) ...	0	0	0
Puerperal Fever ...	1	0	1
Pneumonia ...	13	0	21
Other diseases generally notifiable. (Specify disease)			(all forms).
Erysipelas ...	4	0	0
Other diseases notifiable locally. (Specify disease)			
Tuberculosis :—			
(a) Pulmonary M. ...	9	0	5
F. ...	8	0	6
Total ...	17	0	0
(b) Non-pulmonary M. ...	2	0	5
F. ...	2	0	0
Total ...	4	0	0
Ophthalmia Neonatorum—Cases Notified, 4 (treated at home).			

4.—SICKNESS DURING YEAR.

No special sickness, in fact the District has been remarkably free of infectious diseases.

5.—HOSPITALS AND OTHER INSTITUTIONS AVAILABLE FOR THE DISTRICT.

(a) Hospitals provided or subsidised by the Local Authority or by the County Council:

(1) Tuberculosis—No. of Beds, 0.

(2) Maternity—No. of Beds, 0.

(3) Children—No. of Beds, 0.

(4) Fever—No. of Beds, 0.

(5) Smallpox—No. of Beds, 24 (available at N.W. Gloucestershire Joint Hospital for Smallpox).

(6) Other—No. of Beds, 0.

(b) Ambulance Facilities:

(a) For infectious cases—Only for Smallpox at N.W. Gloucestershire Joint Hospital.

(b) For non-infectious and accident cases at the Collieries.

6.—LIST OF ADOPTIVE ACTS, BYE-LAWS AND LOCAL REGULATIONS RELATING TO PUBLIC HEALTH.

7.—SANITARY ADMINISTRATION.

(a) Is there deficiency in any part, and, if so, what part or parts?—There is always a deficiency of water over the whole of the district more or less, and a constantly recurring famine with every drought.

(1) WATER SUPPLY.

(b) Has there been any change in the existing sources of supply?—No.

(c) Has any application for a Loan been made?—Yes.

(1) Amount—£2,200.

(2) Purpose—Sinking trial well at Redbrook in search of supply.

(d) Number of new connections with public supply?—Nil.

(e) Number of wells sunk, or improved sources of supply provided—18.

(f) Number of wells closed—0.

(g) Number of samples taken for examination—0.

(2) SEWERAGE AND DRAINAGE.

(a) In what parishes, if any, is there need for:

(1) A sewerage system?—A sewerage system in Lydbrook Valley will have to be carried through some day by East Dean and West Dean conjointly.

(2) Improvements in existing sewerage?—None.

(3) Improvements in sewage disposal?—None.

(b) Has any application for a Loan been made?—No.

(c) Number of houses in each parish newly connected with sewers—0.

(d) Number of w.e.'s newly supplied with flushing cisterns—2.

(e) Number of earth closets, pail closets, or improved privies constructed—10.

(f) Number of notices served to empty "Privy Vaults"—53.

(g) Number of privy vaults abolished—0.

(3) REFUSE DISPOSAL.

(a) In what parishes have arrangements been made for the removal or disposal of house refuse?—None.

(b) What changes in the collection or disposal were made during 1925?—Nil.

(4) NUMBERS INSPECTED OF EACH OF THE FOLLOWING :

					Total		
					No. on Register.	No. Inspected.	No. of Inspections
(a) Common Lodging Houses	...	...	...	0	...	0	0
(b) Slaughter Houses	...	...	...	6	...	6	12
(c) Bakehouses	...	...	...	24	...	24	26
(d) Dairies, Cowsheds, Milkshops	...	...	...	24	...	24	32
(e) Canal Boats	...	...	...	0	...	0	0
(f) Workshops	...	...	...	25	...	25	30
(g) Residences of out-workers	...	...	...	0	...	0	0

(5) GENERAL.

- (a) Number of complaints received—13.
- (b) Number of nuisances reported to District Council—
 - (1) Total—4.
 - (2) Swine—0.
- (c) Total number of nuisances abated—54.
- (d) Total number of preliminary notices served—63.
- (e) Total number of Statutory notices served—2.
- (f) Total number of summonses taken out—0.
- (g) Total number of convictions—0.
- (h) Number of houses disinfected—9.
- (i) Methods of disinfection used—Fumigation, free use of disinfectants, boiling and burning (in some cases the bedding), removal of wallpaper, white lining, etc.

(8) PUBLIC HEALTH STAFF.

- (1) Medical Officer of Health—P. BUCHANAN. Qualifications—M.B., C.M.
- (2) Sanitary Inspector—PHILIP PHIPPS.
- (3) Health Visitor—MRS. WATKINS. Qualifications—Health Visitor's Diploma, C.M.B. Certificate, and Sanitary Inspector's Certificate (London).

(9) HOUSING.

Number of new houses erected during the year:

- (a) Total—18 (Subsidy grant of £75 towards 17).
- (b) As part of a municipal housing scheme—0.

1. Unfit dwelling-houses.

Inspection—(1) Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts)—37.

(2) Number of dwelling-houses which were inspected and recorded under the Housing (Inspection of District) Regulations, 1910—3.

(3) Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation—2.

(4) Number of dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-heading) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation—12.

2. Remedy of defects without Service of formal Notices.

Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their Officers—13.

3. Action under Statutory Powers.

A.—Proceedings under section 28 of the Housing, Town Planning, &c., Act, 1919.

(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs—2.

(2) Number of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit:—

(a) by owners—1.

(b) by Local Authority in default of owners—0.

(3) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders became operative in pursuance of declarations by owners of intention to close—1.

B.—Proceedings under Public Health Acts.

(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied—3.

(2) Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied:—

(a) by owners—3.

(b) by Local Authority in default of owners—0.

C.—Proceedings under sections 17 and 18 of the Housing, Town Planning, &c., Act, 1909.

(1) Number of representations made with a view to the making of Closing Orders—2.

(2) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders were made—2.

(3) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the dwelling-houses having been rendered fit—1.

(4) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made—0.

(5) Number of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders—0.

(10) **WHAT ARE THE CHIEF SANITARY REQUIREMENTS OF THE DISTRICT?**

A good Water Supply. Provision for the isolation of infectious diseases.

(Signed) **P. BUCHANAN, M.B.,**

Medical Officer of Health.

WEST DEAN RURAL DISTRICT.

FACTORIES, WORKSHOPS AND WORKPLACES.

INSPECTION.

Including Inspections made by Sanitary Inspectors or Inspectors of Nuisances.

				Number of		
				Inspections.	Written Notices.	Occupiers prosecuted.
Factories (Including Factory Laundries)	...	...	...	8	0	0
Workshops (Including Workshop Laundries)	...	...	...	6	0	0
Total	...	...	...	14		

DEFECTS FOUND.

				Number of Defects		
				Found	Remedied	Referred to H.M. Inspector.
Want of Cleanliness	...	...	...	0	0	0
Want of Ventilation	...	...	...	0	0	0
Overcrowding	...	...	...	0	0	0
Want of Drainage of Floors	...	...	...	0	0	0
Other Nuisances	...	...	...	0	0	0
Sanitary Accommodation – Unsuitable and Defective	...	...	...	1	partly	
Total	...	...	...	1	partly	

There is no Out Work to report under Section 108.